

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
AUGUST 22, 2011

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Phillip L. Forrester, Gary Sherrer, Attorney, Mark Pool, Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver, called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Curtis Harvey gave the invocation. Commissioner Forrester led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Commissioner Battles seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported since there was no administrative meeting last week due to some being out of town. He pointed out the commission would be using their alternative rules allowing a little more discussion before motions.

The chairman stated in the last few days some of our strong community leaders had passed away, and he asked that everyone please keep the families of Ralph Smith, Dr. Roy Driggers, and Terrell McCord in their prayers. He also asked everyone to please keep Mike Lee and his family in their thoughts and prayers. Commissioner Harvey also stated MSGT. Hailey Hogan, one of Northview's first ROTC Instructors, had passed away and he asked that his family also be remembered.

He announced there would be a meeting with the department heads regarding the budget on August 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M.

The chairman reported the school year had begun and he urged the traveling public to please be careful in the school zones. He also encouraged citizens to go and support the various football teams in the city and county.

Chairman Culver reported although Hurricane Irene was not on our path at this time, everyone needed to have a hurricane preparedness plan.

#### Awards and Presentations

Chairman Culver asked Commissioners Siquefield and Battles to come forward. He reported these two commissioners were elected in 2010. He pointed out a state law that was passed during former Chairman Robert Crowder's tenure as President of the ACCA, requires any newly elected commissioner within the first two years of taking their office, to take 50 hours of training. The chairman reported it helps those elected officials who have gotten into something that they have no knowledge of, and it helps them to become better commissioners. He reported statewide, there had been an improvement

in the levels of county commissions over the years. He presented them with their plaques recognizing the fact that they have completed the legally mandated educational requirements for Alabama County Commissioners and have done it in less than two years. He commended them, and stated he appreciated both of them taking the initiative and making the effort to complete these courses. The chairman reported knowing them like he does he felt they would have done it whether it was legally mandated or not. He pointed out Commissioner Harvey had also completed these courses, as well as every commissioner who has served since the bill was passed. He congratulated both of them.

Commissioner Battles reported the education was worthwhile and to understand more about how the commission works. He stated he felt anyone who wants to seek an elected position should go through the ethics class because it is an eye opener.

Commissioner Sinquefield reported it was an honor to be a commissioner and he respected the position. He stated he realized the importance of being able to serve the people of Houston County and that he looked forward to implementing a lot of the things they had learned in an effort to better serve the citizens of the county.

Chairman Culver reported Bill Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer, also received his plaque of certification. He commended Mr. Dempsey on taking the necessary courses to become certified.

1. Proclamation – “Wiregrass United Way Day” – Ben Slingluff, Chairman, Houston County Board of Directors and Charles Buntin, Houston County Campaign Chairman

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Ben Slingluff, Chairman, Houston County Board of Directors, and Mr. Charles Buntin, Houston County Campaign Chairman, and Mr. Walter Hill, Executive Director, to come forward. Chairman Culver reported there was a Proclamation and he called for the motion. Commissioner Forrester made the motion to approve the Proclamation declaring September 8<sup>th</sup> as “Wiregrass United Way Day” in Houston County. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. The chairman then read the Proclamation and presented it to Mr. Hill. Chairman Culver reported the commission appreciated all the United Way does for the community. He stated the commission was in the middle of its budget process and the county and the United Way fund a lot of the same agencies. The chairman reported government funding and revenues are down and over the next couple of years they were probably looking at some significant cuts and the agencies would be leaning heavily on the United Way.

Mr. Hill thanked the chairman and the commission. He then introduced Mr. Ben Slingluff, Chairman, Houston County Board of Directors, and Mr. Charles Buntin, Houston County Campaign Chairman. He reported the Wiregrass United Way does a tremendous amount for the community, and it is because of the community and the outstanding support they receive throughout the year. Mr. Hill reported they are in the middle of their PaceSetter Campaign, and they will be at the Houston County department head meeting on Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup> to kickoff the campaign. He stated he appreciated Mrs. Starla Matthews’ office agreeing to run the campaign again this year. Mr. Hill reported September 8<sup>th</sup> would be “Wiregrass United Way Day” and would be the big kickoff, and they would be doing a bus tour throughout the Wiregrass again this year. Mr. Hill reported the Houston County part of the kickoff

would be held at 3:30 P.M. at the Wiregrass Rehab Center, and he invited everyone to attend. He stated their goal for the year is \$2,345,678.00, a 4.17% increase over the amount raised last year. Mr. Hill reported the volunteers were confident they would reach their goal.

Mr. Buntin thanked everyone in Houston County for being a part of the United Way. He reported with the state of the economy the agencies needed this money more and more. Mr. Buntin reported other counties in the Wiregrass United Way always look to Houston County to be the frontrunner. He pointed out they have a lot of momentum and energy and they would be hitting areas they have never hit before. He encouraged everyone to get involved.

Mr. Slingsluff urged everyone to "Live United and Think We Before Me."

Chairman Culver thanked them for coming.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request to accept Community Development Grant from the Wiregrass Foundation for the Dothan-Houston County Economic Summit.

Chairman Culver reported the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Economic Summit is August 31<sup>st</sup>, and people can register by going to the Economic Summit website or by calling the Mayor's office, 615-3111. He stated it is an all day event to talk about creating jobs in our community. The chairman pointed out this will be a really good event. He reported this year through the county commission, the Wiregrass Foundation was asked to help fund the cost, and they stepped up and agreed. He stated the commission needed to serve as the flow through. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve Houston County serving as the flow through for the acceptance of the Community Development Grant from the Wiregrass Foundation for the Dothan-Houston County Economic Summit. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

2. Request to adopt Resolution setting sewer rate for the entities located in and connected to the Houston County Industrial Park.

Chairman Culver reported this step needed to be done before the next item, which he hoped the commission would enter into an agreement with the Alabama Department of Transportation. He stated part of the ALDOT agreement is the sewer rate schedule, and thought it appropriate to set the schedule before the agreement was adopted. The chairman reported Mr. James Brannon, PolyEngineering, had done the work on this and was present to answer any questions. Chairman Culver reported Addendum #1 contained the suggested sewer rate schedule. The chairman asked if these were the same rates the county was currently billing McLane? Mr. Brannon stated no, they would be higher rates.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to adopt the Resolution setting the sewer rate for the entities located in and connected to the Houston County Industrial Park. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried. (Please see in Resolution Book)

3. Request to approve Agreement with Alabama Department of Transportation to connect the 231 South Rest Area/Welcome Center to the Houston County Industrial Park Sewage Treatment Facility.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Agreement with the Alabama Department of Transportation to connect the 231 South Rest Area/Welcome Center to the Houston County Industrial Park Sewage Treatment Facility. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. The chairman reported this has been ongoing for about a year and a half. He stated the Rest Area on 231 South has had some issues with their septic tank over the years. He pointed out the county was approached and through negotiations between the Department of Transportation, the county, and PolyEngineering on the county's behalf, and were able to come up with the agreement. Chairman Culver reported the state will be responsible for all the costs to run all of the lines to the county's facility, and they will also be paying for the cost of upgrading the county's facility. He reported it was good for the county because it will give additional capacity for any future entity that might locate in the Industrial Park. The chairman reported they were in the process of having it dedicated as an Advantage Site, in hopes of creating some activity. Chairman Culver pointed out whatever the costs, the state will pay them over a three year period. He stated he thought it was a win-win situation for both parties. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve proposed precinct changes and submit them to the Department of Justice – Luke Cooley, Probate Judge.

Chairman Culver reported Judge Cooley was present if anyone had any questions. He stated at the last meeting, a public hearing was discussed and he reported in essence what they were talking about doing was closing Harmon School voting place because the county does not have any choice due to the availability of Harmon School going away. He stated they were talking about closing Dupree Community Center from a physical and efficiency perspective. The chairman pointed out in one election there were only 35 people who voted there and there is a cost. He reported in that move some of them might have to drive a little further but a lot of them will have to drive a shorter distance. The chairman reported the proposed plan is located on the easel. He stated the last part of it would move a couple of places in town mainly dealing with Andrew Bell, Wiregrass Park, and the Farm Center. The chairman reported currently, there are some people down Hodgesville Road and 231 South driving past the Farm Center to go to Wiregrass Park. Chairman Culver reported there was a public hearing and it was advertised, and the media assisted with helping to get the word out. He pointed out no one showed up that had any objections to the changes, and there was one person gathering information but had no objection. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the proposed precinct changes and submit them to the Department of Justice. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. The chairman asked for any other discussion.

Commissioner Sinquefield stated he knew there was a public hearing for those in the precincts in District #2 concerning Dupree Community Center, and those that realized that Harmon School had to be closed due to the county board of education leasing it. He reported he was getting a lot of calls from the Dupree precinct because some of the people do not want it closed due to them getting older and their concerns about having to move into urban areas. He stated even though these citizens have been asked to come and voice their opinion at the public hearings, and none of them came, he was still receiving calls.

Judge Cooley stated the longest distance a person would have to travel to vote is 3-5 miles. The chairman pointed out some will be closer. He reported he felt part of the concern was helping those in that precinct with where they need to go, and understanding where their new voting place would be so they will feel comfortable. The chairman stated change is difficult and with time once they understand what they have to do they will be receptive. Judge Cooley reported none of the precincts are hidden and everyone that lives in that area knows where Enterprise Church and the Cottonwood Senior Citizens Center are located. She stated it is a little different when you see pollworkers that you have never had. She reported other counties have been going through this too, and it is the time for Houston County to make the changes. Commissioner Sinquefield asked about the pollworkers going to other precincts. Judge Cooley stated they would try to absorb them as they are needed. She stated there is a lot of change out in the county, and when they are needed they will call them. Judge Cooley pointed out the four that are currently there had only served two years. She stated they are good, trained workers, and she did not want to lose them.

Judge Cooley stated they had received approval from the state to use HAVA funds to pave the Madrid Senior Center Parking lot. Chairman Culver stated they would have to get it scheduled.

Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request from EMA to approve budget amendments regarding Grant Disaster Assistance – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Mr. Clark Matthews, EMA Director, reported this was revenue they received from state FEMA for their trips to north Alabama. He pointed out some of it was more trailer that they took Huntsville, and reimbursement for that and the damage to it. Mr. Matthews reported someone tried to take a torch and cut into it and they had to pay the repairs. He stated it was felt someone was trying to get the generator. Mr. Matthews reported they looked at all of the angles on the revenue and it was in the county's best interest to lease the equipment. He stated they were requesting the revenue be given back to his department. Chairman Culver reported it would go back into the General Fund. Mr. Mathews stated they had already deposited it into the General Fund. He reported they were asking that it be put back in because they were facing hurricane season, and some of their accounts are in the red. The chairman reported this would be addressed at the end of the year. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the budget amendments regarding the Grant Disaster Assistance. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached budget amendments in Minute Book)

6. Request to award bids on uniforms for the Sheriff's Department and Jail.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to award the bids on uniforms for the Sheriff's Department and Jail to Azar's, low bidder meeting specs. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached bid summary sheet in Minute Book)

7. Liquor License Request – 020 – Restaurant Retail Liquor – Hog Feathers, LLC d/b/a Hog Feathers, 3087 County Road #59, Dothan, AL 36301

Chairman Culver asked if there was anyone in attendance opposed to the license? Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Liquor License Request for an O20 Restaurant Retail Liquor License for Hog Feathers, LLC d/b/a Hog Feathers, 3087 County Road #59, Dothan, AL 36301. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

8. Request to extend bid for one year with Total Petroleum, LLC for gasoline and diesel fuels.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to extend the bid for one year with Total Petroleum, LLC for gasoline and diesel fuels. Commissioner Sinuefield seconded the motion. Mr. Pool reported according to Alabama State Law, when a bid is written correctly, it can be extended for three years and this is the last year to extend it. He stated next year it will have to be bid. Commissioner Battles asked if it was a set price? Mr. Pool reported it is a set price per gallon. He stated they get a price from OPUS daily and their delivery price is three-fourths of a penny over the OPUS price. Chairman Culver reported it is a little misleading in that it is not a set price per gallon on a sign at the gas station (\$3.50 per gallon) It is based on an Index Number then plus or minus over or above or below that Index. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached letter in Minute Book)

9. Request to extend bid for six months with ConTech Construction Products for bituminous coated roadway drainage pipe.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to extend the bid for six months with ConTech Construction Products for bituminous coated roadway drainage pipe. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Mr. Pool reported if the price of fuel goes way down, then they would re-bid it. He stated it can be extended for three years, but he is doing it in six month increments due to the economy. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached letter in Minute Book)

10. Request to sell four (4) Mack trucks at auction.

Mr. Pool reported these would be sold at the DeanCo Auction in Philadelphia, MS in September. He stated they would charge 5%. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to sell four Mack trucks at the DeanCo Auction in Philadelphia, MS, in September. Commissioner Sinuefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported these four will be sold and if approved, there will be two budgeted. He stated the funds from the auction would be used to purchase the two new trucks. Commissioner Battles asked if anyone would be at the auction? Mr. Pool stated the auction would be live on the internet and they could watch it. Mr. Pool reported their market is huge and he prefers to sell things over there because of better prices. Chairman Culver reported for 2-3 years the county was buying trucks and turning around and selling them at a better price, but unfortunately that went away. The chairman reported that is how they became familiar with the auction in Mississippi. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

Chairman Culver reported since there was no administrative meeting, the Sheriff had a request to be placed on the agenda to allow the Sheriff's Office to purchase one 2012 Ford F250 Crew Cab truck at a cost of \$40,000.00 to be purchased from Homeland Security Funds. He stated this is a 100% grant. He

reported this would take unanimous consent to be placed on the agenda. The chairman asked if there were any objections? There being none, the chairman asked if there were any questions? He stated it was being purchased off the state bid. Chairman Culver then asked for a motion? Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the Sheriff's request to purchase one 2012 Ford F250 Crew Cab truck at a cost of \$40,000.00 to be purchased from Homeland Security Funds on a 100% grant, and the appropriate budget amendment. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Culver requested to know when the purchase is made in order to know which budget it affects. Mr. Dempsey stated it would be shown under a grant category and would not affect the budget. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer –

Mr. Pool reported they were working on Rowland Road. They had paved Cherry Rock Road, and planned to resurface Woodham Road. He stated as soon as Woodham Road is resurfaced, they plan to turn these roads over to the city as part of the swap. He reported the check was received from Sumter County for \$137,000. He stated the expenses were absorbed in their budget.

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Battles seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.